

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Slickville Historic District
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number See Continuation Sheet N/A not for publication
city, town Slickville, Salem Township N/A vicinity
state PA code PA county Westmoreland code 129 zip code 15684

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>90</u>	<u>12</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>91</u>	<u>12</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Bituminous Coal and Coke Resources of PA.Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Dr. Brent Glass, Exec. DirectorDate 4/1/94Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic-Single and Multiple Dwellings
Religion-Church
Industry/Extractive Facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic-Single and Multiple Dwellin
Religion-Church

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

No StyleOther: Vernacular Company Housing

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone, Concretewalls Woodroof Asphalt Shingles

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally☒ statewide☐ locallyApplicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☒ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Industry
Community Planning
Architecture
Archaeology-Historic-Nonaboriginal
Social History

Period of Significance

1916-1943

Significant Dates

191619171923

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Tressler, ThomasTruxall, J.A.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

PHMC Johnstown Regional Office

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 62

UTM References

A

17	62,526.4	4,479,504
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

17	62,540.8	4,479,240
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

17	6,251.44	44,796.00
Zone	Easting	Northing

D

17	6,251.56	44,792.16
Zone	Easting	Northing

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

☒ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carmen DiCiccio

organization PA Historical and Museum Commission

street & number 319 Washington Street Suite 379

city or town Johnstown

date January 3, 1994

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Roughly bounded by Greenburg Avenue on the east the back property lot lines of Second Avenue on the south, Delmont Street on the southwest, Court and Cottage Streets on the West, and Fred Street on the north.

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Slickville Historic District consists of extractive and archaeological resources of Slick Mine No. 91 and the company-built mining town, erected by the Cambria Steel Company in 1916 and 1917 on rural property obtained from local farmers in 1900. The district is now part of the unincorporated village of Slickville, situated about five miles north off State Route 22 on State Route 819 in northern Salem Township, Westmoreland County, approximately fifteen miles north of Greenburg and thirty miles east of Pittsburgh. Integrity of setting, location, material, design and association is particularly strong within the proposed historic district. There are 103 resources, 91 of which are contributing and 12 non-contributing in the district. The contributing resources include a company store, a pump house, a church, a school, four utilitarian industrial mine buildings, and 83 company-built vernacular workers' (77) and managers' housing (6). There are eleven non-contributing commercial and residential resources which were constructed after the period of significance. The twelfth non-contributing resource was an original company house that was so altered by its owner that it has lost its historical integrity.

The Slickville Historic District is located on both the western and eastern sides of State Route 819, the principal road in the community. The 62-acre district is located in a valley surrounded by rolling hills and today retains its original turn of the century rural and isolated feeling, surrounded by a scattering of cattle and horse farms and some recently constructed suburban-style single-family dwellings. Single and double company-built houses, commercial and social buildings are located west of State Route 819 on First

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Avenue, Second Avenue, Delmont Street, Depot Street, Maple Court and Cottage Street. On the eastern side of State Route 819, known locally as Greensburg Avenue, are about a dozen former miners' houses and three of the four extant mining buildings. State Route 819 was a dirt road until it was paved by the Works Progress Administration in 1938.

Most of the district's resources were constructed between 1917 and 1923 by the Cambria Steel Company and the Midvale Steel & Ordnance Company Company, Pennsylvania-based steel companies. The Cambria Steel Company of Johnstown developed the first of four drift entry "captive" mines in 1916 on 1,200 acres of property obtained from five local farmers in rural Salem Township since 1900. The company surveyed this property in June and July, 1916, with the first drift entry mine opening in the fall of 1916. These mines were opened to supply a high quality coking coal for the steel company's Rosedale by-product coke oven plant near Johnstown. The four mines were merged and renamed Slick Mine No. 91 after Bethlehem Steel Company acquired the Slick extractive facility in 1923.

The remaining extractive resources of the "captive" mines at Slickville are not as extensive as the district's residential component. For example, the wood tipple, the mule barn, the fan houses, the store house, and the oil and sand house were all razed following the mines' closure in 1943. The four extant mine buildings are concentrated at the juncture of Depot Street, Saltsburg Street and Greensburg Avenue, and have been incorporated into Slickville as residences and storage facilities. A common characteristic of the mine buildings at Slickville is the use of common-bond brick with rows of dark red headers. The machine or motor shop, the power house, the mine office, the foremen's office and

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the lamp house still evoke the historic district's association as a "captive" coal mine. These four brick buildings are all structurally sound and show excellent integrity of materials. The motor barn or machine shop is a tall one-story building measuring 89' x 34' with a 12' x 16' ell in the rear of the building. The building is located on the eastern side of Greensburg Avenue, northwest of the power house and near the sealed entrance to the No. 2 Slick mine. The motor barn is constructed on a stone foundation of common-bond red-brick walls with brick pilasters, with an interior steel frame and riveted steel Fink roof trusses supporting a gable roof. The front and side windows have been infilled with brick. The building has a new large metal garage door at its southern entrance and is used today for storage. The interior of the building was partitioned into three parts reflecting different functions occurring within the building. Electric haulage locomotives, manufactured by the Jeffrey Company of Chicago, were used to transport coal underground to the surface and to the wood tipple, located on southeast side of Saltsburg Street. These electric locomotives were repaired in the front of the building. The blacksmith shop was located in the middle of the building. The blacksmith made and repaired small hand tools and machinery and sharpened the miners' picks and augers daily. The company's mules and horses were shod in this building by the blacksmith. The company stored and distributed blasting caps and explosive powder at the rear of the building carrying about a day's supply. The remainder of the caps and explosives were stored in separate brick buildings in the valley back of the hill that bounds the town in the north. The power or generator house, constructed in 1918 and measuring 33' x 35', is located southeast of the motor barn. Electric power for the mine and the village was obtained from the West Penn Power

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Company until the completion of this building in 1918. It is constructed of common-bond red-brick walls with a stone foundation. Its main facade features a stepped metal gable roof with the date "1918" displayed in large numerals in a recessed panel at the top center of this elevation. The power house has two large sets of 24/24 window lights in metal sashes on each side of the building's central double wooden garage doors. Side and rear elevations also have large windows with metal sashes. The interior of the building, which is vacant, was gutted and stripped of all machinery, including the electrical generators, by a new owner in the fall of 1993.

The foreman's office and lamp house, located immediately to the right of the power house and facing south onto Saltsburg Street, is a one-story brick building measuring 54' x 12'. The building contains stretcher-bond red-brick walls, an asphalt shingle gable roof with a rubble stone foundation. Workers came here each morning and picked up their electric-battery lamps, which had been recharged over night by the lamp man. The fire bosses, shot firers and workers who used electrical machines were issued methane detecting safety gas lamps here. The interior of the building was recently refurbished into a single-family dwelling, although the building's exterior was unaltered except that the red bricks were painted white.

The mine office, located at the juncture of Depot Street, Greensburg Avenue and Saltsburg Street, is a two-story, four-bay building that housed various mine executive offices, the engineering office and the pay office. The company-appointed sheriff maintained a small jail in the basement. The building, constructed with a stone foundation, has common-bond red-brick walls now painted white, a flat roof and a stepped

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parapet wall. The original front porch, with its pedimented gable roof and columns, has been removed by subsequent owners. The remodeled building is used as a single family dwelling. A new two-car brick garage is attached to the left side of the building.

Other resources related to coal extraction include the sealed drift entries located throughout the historic district. The slate dump is located outside the district, at the rear of buildings and empty lots fronting the southside of Saltsburg Street. The slate dump is overgrown with vegetation and a number of large trees. The dump is difficult to recognize in the summer with all the foliage in bloom. The slate dump is located in the same general area as the ruins of the mine's tipple near the abandoned railroad bed.

Associated with these extractive resources is the Slickville coal mining community, which was built in 1917. The village is located west of these extractive resources extending to the north and the south on a flat plain that crests in the southern part of the district at Second Avenue. Slickville housing, as in most mining communities, appeared as an adjunct to the mine. The village was financed, built and operated by three steel companies to attract miners and their families to this rural environment. All plans for its construction were based on the mine's capacity to produce about 3,000 gross tons of coal per day, which was the daily capacity of the mine's wood tipple, constructed in 1916. Company engineers and geologists predicted the mine would operate for about twenty years based on daily production of about 3,200 tons per day. The lack of housing and infrastructure in isolated Salem Township made it imperative for the Cambria Steel Company, the original owner and developer of the district, to provide their workers and managers with housing, and other needs such as water, a retail store, a school, and a church to attract a labor force

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and reduce labor turnover. The layout of Slickville did not employ the standard grid or linear town plan prevalent in most large contemporary mining communities of western Pennsylvania. Instead, company engineers utilized a curvilinear town plan in designing Slickville. First Avenue and Second Avenue located on the southern boundary of the district and at the town's center located at Greensburg Avenue and Delmont Street, are two curved streets extending west off State Route 819 and intersecting at Delmont Street. The company store, the Pennsylvania Railroad station (since demolished), the baseball diamond and management housing on Maple Court were constructed north of the town center. Additional housing was located on both sides of Greensburg Avenue, on the east side of Cottage Avenue, and on the north side of both Delmont Street and Depot Street.

Five varieties of workers' houses and one type of managers' houses were constructed between 1917 and 1923, and all of these housing types are found in the district. All types of houses in the district were of frame construction and "ready-cut" type. Severe labor shortages caused by American involvement in World War One prompted the Cambria Steel Company to construct all their frame houses from "ready cut" lumber. The company built about 89 houses on seven streets within the district, including nine on First Avenue, 26 on Second Avenue, six on Delmont Street, four on Depot Street, six on Maple Court, 13 on Cottage Avenue and 25 on Greensburg Avenue. The Cambria Steel Company constructed temporary workers' housing for men building the mine buildings and drift entry in 1916. None of this housing is still standing. The first permanent miners' housing constructed on First Avenue and Second Avenue in 1917 and 1918 was two-story semidetached. Building materials were transported to Slickville from Saltsburg by road, five miles away to the east,

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Saltsburg being the nearest railroad connection at that time.

The community had developed before the start of railroad service to Slickville. Thomas Tressler, an Apollo contractor, hired by the Cambria Steel Company, precut all the lumber required in the construction of the houses on First Avenue and the mine's tipple. The houses were built by miners because of the regional labor shortage. Each two-story ten room semidetached house measured 24' x 40' exclusive of the front and rear porches. Each side had a large living room and a kitchen, each measuring 19' 3" x 11' 3" on the first floor, with three bedrooms on the second floor with plenty of closet space. The two front bedrooms measured 9' 6" x 11' 3", while the large rear master bedroom measured 16' x 10'. The house had an open front porch measuring 8' x 20' and an 6' x 26 ' open rear porch. The exterior surface was composed of shingles and stucco and it had a slate hip roof constructed on a stone foundation. The houses were originally constructed accompanied by outhouse, with concrete vaults, located at the rear alley. In the 1920s, a bathroom, with a bathtub and a water heater, was added on the second floor by converting a linen closet. Tenants paid \$7.50 per month rent, \$1.50 for electricity, \$2 for coal and nothing for water in 1923. Ten of these houses are still extant with eight located on the southern side of First Avenue, and two on Second Avenue. The new private owners have replaced the original slate roof with asphalt roofs. The exteriors of all the houses are now covered with asbestos, aluminum or insul-brick sidings. Four of the buildings have been converted into single dwelling houses by new owners. The houses were constructed without basements, but today all have full basements constructed after the houses were sold to private owners in 1943.

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A second type of miners' house was constructed in 1918 by the Cambria Steel Company. Twenty two-story single-family houses with two bays and five-room houses, measuring 22' x 22' excluding the front porch, were constructed on both sides of Second Avenue. Each frame house was constructed with an asphalt shingle hip roof and a central brick chimney. Each house had a living room and kitchen on the first floor, with three small bedrooms on the second floor. Each had a full-length porch and was built on a stone foundation. Bathrooms were later installed on second floors by the company. The company erected additional five-room workers' houses on both side of Greensburg Avenue and on the north sides of Depot Street.

A third type of workers' housing containing four rooms was constructed in 1920 on the northside of Depot Street, on Second Avenue, and on both sides of Greensburg Avenue, north of the company office. A single four-room house was constructed at the east corner of First Avenue, across from the former school. These two-story, two-bay houses had asphalt shingle hip roofs. Each had a kitchen and a parlor on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second floor. The houses lacked inside bathrooms, but each dwelling was equipped with running water and a toilet on the back porch. These houses rented for \$10.50 per month in 1923.

A fourth type of housing was constructed on both sides of Apollo Road, now Greensburg Avenue, north of the company office. About a dozen houses, measuring 22' x 24', were constructed in 1919. These single-family, six-room two-bay frame houses, with asphalt shingle hip roofs, were occupied by foremen, skilled miners or clerical company employees. Each house contained a kitchen, living room and dining room, with three

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bedrooms and a bath on the second floor. All the houses built in 1918 and 1919 were provided with the Sanisept system of sewage disposal. All the original houses constructed on Greensburg Avenue are still extant. Only one house has its visible original frame construction. New owners have covered the frame exteriors with aluminum and vinyl siding. Some of the front porches have been enlarged, while a few were enclosed to create a front sitting room.

The Midvale Steel & Ordnance Company of Philadelphia, the second owner of Slickville, built the last type of workers' houses in the district in 1921 and 1922. Nineteen one-story frame bungalows were built to meet an acute housing shortage caused by a boom in coal production at the mines. The mines employed 185 workers in 1920 and produced 110,000 tons of coal. By 1923, coal production rose substantially and the Slick mines employed nearly 500 surface and underground workers. The five-room bungalows are located on the west side of the district on the north side of Delmont Street and in the northwest part of the district on one row on the eastside of Cottage Street off Greensburg Avenue. Each bungalow had clapboard siding with a shingle gable roof that extended over a 6' x 22' open front porch, constructed on 12-inch thick concrete piers. The houses had a central brick chimney. Each house had a 14' x 14' living room, an 11' x 14" dining room, two bedrooms one measuring 12.3' x 14', and the other 10' x 14', and an 11.6' x 13' kitchen constructed in an ell at the rear of the house. Each house was built without a basement, without indoor running water or an inside bathroom. A hydrant, located between every two houses, provided the tenants with their water supply. A wood outhouse, located in the rear of the lot near the alley, was fitted with a concrete vault. An inside water supply was

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not provided because the company felt the pipes would likely freeze. The original six bungalows on the northside of Delmont Street are still extant, and ten of the thirteen bungalows on Cottage Street survive today. Most of these houses have been remodeled with aluminum or asbestos sidings covering the original clapboard. Some of the front porches have been enclosed and are used as sitting rooms. Bathrooms and enlarged kitchens have been added to the rear of some of these bungalows.

The village was consciously designed as a segregated and hierarchically arranged community with prominent company officials and their families residing apart from workers and their families. The steel company constructed five spacious seven-room houses on Maple Court in 1919, for management personnel, from the same design. This was the sixth type of housing constructed in the district. This area was called "Bosses' Rows" or "Silk Row" by Slickville miners because these spacious houses were built exclusively for senior company officials. "Bosses' Row" is located north of the former company store and across Depot Street from the former site of the Pennsylvania Railroad station. Five of the six houses on Maple Court - located at 401 (doctor's), 403 (chief electrician), 405 (pit boss), 407 (post master), 409 (manager of the company store) - were seven-room houses with a second floor bath. Each of these two-story wood-frame single family dwellings contained a gable roof with a front shed dormer. A narrow second floor porch with two doors and four windows was constructed over the front porch. Each house measured 28' x 30' and included a cement front porch measuring 8' x 30'. On the first floor is a 12' x 16' kitchen, a 14' x 18' dining room and a 14' x 30' living room with four bedrooms on the second floor measuring 8' x 12', 11'4' x 14' and 2

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15' x 16' bedrooms. The second floor bathroom, measuring 6' x 10.5', was equipped with hot and cold water, a toilet and a bath. A single-car frame garage was built next to each house. Officials paid a monthly rent of \$15 in 1923.

The company doctor's office was originally an unattached 15' x 25' one-story stretch-bond building with a corbeled brick cornice and a gable roof with a rubble stone foundation. His house was located next door to the office. A subsequent owner of the former doctor's house at 401 Maple Court has constructed a double car garage between the office and the house. The doctor's office is used for storage by the current owner. The mine superintendent resided at 411 Maple Court in a custom designed company house built for him and his family by the steel company. This house was built with a full basement, which held a hot water boiler and coal furnace. An open back and side porch was attached to the house. The first floor of the frame two-story house contained a large living room, dining room and kitchen with a fireplace on the first floor. The second floor contained two large master bedrooms and two small bedrooms with a full bathroom. Two furnished rooms were found in the attic. The current owner has closed in both porches and constructed a double garage to the left of the house, and the frame house has been covered with aluminum siding.

A variety of commercial and social buildings, including a school, a company store, a company office and a church, were constructed during the period of significance, 1916-1943. All these resources are still extant, although their usage has changed. The brick company store, located on the south side of Depot Street, was constructed in 1919 and was owned by the Cambria Steel Company. However, it was leased and operated by the

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Miners' Supply Company, a stock organization. Pennsylvania law from 1891 forbade mining companies to own and operate the stores at their mines. The loosely written law did not prevent coal companies from setting up subsidiary companies to operate stores on their behalf. The Services Store Corporation operated the company store at Slickville for Bethlehem Steel from 1923 to 1943. This subsidiary company operated approximately nine company stores in western Pennsylvania and seven in West Virginia. The one-story company store, measuring 42' x 82', retains a number of its original elements, including common-bond red-brick construction and stepped gables on the main and rear facades. The building features a corbeled brick cornice on the main facade and has a store front composed of large display windows (now boarded) with multi-light transoms and a recessed central entry. It has rectangular windows with concrete sills. The store has a full basement and rests on a stone foundation and has a gable roof. Slickville's first post office was located in the rear of the company store. It became a third-class post office in July, 1922.

The company store operated between 1919 and closed around 1943. The Pennsylvania Railroad ran behind the store, and inventory was unloaded at this point. The company sold groceries, meats, miners' supplies and general merchandise to workers and their families. The store was run on a strictly competitive basis with the privately-owned businesses on Saltsburg Street, east of the company store. Some 15 rival stores of various kinds operated in this privately owned commercial district by 1922. The store was operated as a privately owned general store until the business closed during the mid-1960s. A local oil company is currently using the building for storage.

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The pump house, located northeast of the company store, is a small one-story abandoned building, measuring 17' x 22." The building has common-bond red-brick walls with a shed concrete roof and a rubble stone foundation. A small metal derrick is located on top of the building. The pump house contained an electric pump which lifted water from a 90-foot well for use in the village and the mine. Water was pumped for storage to a wood water tower in an area west of the superintendent's house and near the No. 3 drift mine.

The Slickville Historic District has only one church within its boundary, although three churches are located within walking distance of the district. The Presbyterian Church of Slickville, located on the western side of Greensburg Avenue, north of the town center, was constructed entirely within the district's boundary. The church was built on a 150' x 150' lot purchased by the congregation from the steel company on June 11, 1922. The skilled and white collar mine personnel, known as "cake eaters" by the foreign-born coal loaders of Slickville, contributed to its construction costs and attended the church. They were of English, Welsh, Scotch-Irish, and Irish extraction. With the rapid rise of coal and coke production at the turn of the century, they had assumed dominant positions of authority in the operation of mines and coke plants of Pennsylvania. Southern European and eastern European immigrants and later African-Americans were employed as unskilled laborers who hand-loaded coal. They were paid piece rate by the coal company per ton, per yard or per coal cart. The church was completed in 1923 and dedicated on November 23, 1924. The Presbyterian Church is a one-story frame building with clapboard siding painted white. The church has an asphalt shingle gable roof and a central bell tower constructed on a stone foundation. The church is still open and every Sunday holds church

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services and bible school. There are three churches - Roman Catholic, Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Baptist Church - in the vicinity of Slickville, although none are located within the district's boundary (see endnote for their locations).

Slickville's original school was a small, two-room frame building on the present-day site of the baseball diamond, across from St. Sylvester's Roman Catholic Church on State Route 819. The building was abandoned in 1922 following the construction of a new township school, the Sloan Public School, on the west side of State Route 819, bounded by Second Street and Delmont Street. The school was conceived at a school board meeting held on September 22, 1921. J.A. Truxall, a contractor from Apollo, was awarded the contract to construct an eight-room red brick building by the Salem Township school board. The building was completed in 1922 at a cost of \$52,741 on property acquired from the steel company by Salem Township. The school was steam heated and equipped with its own Sanisept sewage disposal system. The school was named in honor of the Sloans, one of the five pioneer families that sold property to the Cambria Steel Company beginning in 1900. This two-story building has a flat roof and a brick parapet. The school opened for the 1922 fall term and operated continuously until its closure in July 1, 1979, when it was closed. After its closure students were transported by bus to Metzgar School near New Alexandria. The school was recently renovated and serves as a family health care business.

The Slickville Historic District is an intact, minimally altered example of a "captive" coal mine and planned company town of the first quarter of the 20th century. Overall, the district's 91 contributing buildings maintain a high degree of integrity and strongly convey

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the feeling of the district's historical function as a planned coal town and extractive facility. Four of about a dozen extractive buildings of Slick Mine No. 91 still survive and these buildings maintain excellent integrity.

More than 90% of the original housing inventory of the district is nearly intact and strongly reflects a variety of housing constructed between 1917 and 1923. There are 83 company-built houses including 77 workers' houses and six senior managers' houses. About six original houses have been razed. Slickville, like other contemporary mining communities, has been modified by the new private owners who have personalized the former company-built houses. The former miners' houses have experienced some alteration including room additions to the rear or the side of the buildings, new siding, and window replacements with energy-efficient windows. The most common change has been the installation of vinyl, aluminum, asbestos or insul-brick siding over original frame houses. This exterior re-siding does not disqualify these houses from contributing to architectural significance because it has not fundamentally changed the shape and size of the buildings. There are only a few surviving frame buildings in the district. Other changes to contributing houses include the enclosure of porches, or their enlargement or removal. Some owners who purchased the semidetached houses on First and Second avenues have converted them into single family houses. Some owners have added basements to the houses and additions to the rear of the houses by extending the size of the small kitchen and adding a bathroom on the first floor. These changes represent almost universal alterations performed on former company-built houses in southwestern Pennsylvania coal towns. These exterior modifications are acceptable because they do not fundamentally change the

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size, design location, or feeling of the original housing. Of the 103 resources in the proposed historic district, only 12 are non-contributing. Only one of the 83 company-owned houses, still extant in the district is classified as a non-contributing resource, because of excessive alteration. This single-family dwelling, located at 238 Second Avenue, was seriously altered by the new private owner. These exterior alterations made the former miner's house incompatible in terms of material, scale, design and massing. The second type of non-contributing resource is that constructed after the period of significance. Twelve non-contributing resources were constructed after 1943 and include two mobile trailers, five private single-family dwellings, and five commercial buildings, located on Second Avenue (five), on Greensburg Avenue (one), on Depot Street (four) and on Maple Court (two). The five commercial resources include an aluminum storage shed, a telephone relay station, an auto repair shop, and two abandoned buildings used in a lumber business. The twelve non-contributing resources highlighted above comprise about one tenth of the total resources in the district. These resources are scattered throughout the district, and their presence does not intrude on or affect the general integrity of the historic district.

Footnote - Location of neighboring churches

Slovak was the largest ethnic group in the town, followed by Italian, Ukrainian and Polish. These new immigrant miners were dismissed by mine owners and skilled native-born American miners as "representatives of the beaten races of the world " and collectively

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labeled as "hunkies." Nearly one-half of all miners in 1910 were foreign-born, and one in seven miners was the American-born son of a foreign-born parents. Immigrant miners and their families organized and constructed churches to install and maintain cultural and language ties. They attended one of the churches located on the periphery of the district. St. Sylvester's, the town's original Roman Catholic Church, was a small one-story frame building constructed between 1918-1920 and dedicated on June 21, 1921. The church was razed in the mid-1960s when a larger church was constructed near the site of the original church, on the east side of State Route 819. The Byzantine Catholic Church of Slickville was constructed in 1924 on Westmoreland Avenue, off Saltsburg Street. The church is a one-story aluminum sided block building and is distinguished by its single metal onion-shaped dome and Byzantine crosses. The original church has been remodelled and renamed the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Parkview Baptist Church was constructed by African-American miners and their families about September 1926. Several dozen African-American miners worked at the Slickville mine and in the neighboring mining towns of Elrico and Patton, located east of the historic district on Saltsburg Street. They were imported from the South by local companies as "scab" labor during the violent 1922 national coal strike. Miners and their families from Slickville, Patton and Elrico constructed and attended this church. The church, located on Georganna Drive, a cul de sac off Saltsburg Street, is a one-story aluminum-sided building with a shingle gable roof constructed on a stone foundation.

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria consideration, and areas and periods of significances noted above.

The Slickville Historic District, located in northern Salem Township, Westmoreland County is significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of industry and social history, community planning and development for its association with the three steel companies which constructed the district as a planned coal mining town and "captive" coal mine. The district is a well-preserved example of a company-planned bituminous coal community and "captive" coal facility constructed by a series of steel companies dating from the first quarter of the 20th century. The historic district demonstrates the services and amenities obtained by workers and their families from the steel company. The former office, company store, church, school and doctor's office are still extant with minimal alteration to the original buildings.

The district also meets Criterion C in the area of architecture, the company buildings including 77 extant miners' houses and six managers' houses are excellent examples of vernacular architecture that characterized company buildings found in the numerous coal mining communities constructed by steel companies throughout the four bituminous coal fields of Pennsylvania. The housing resources at Slickville rival those of the Marianna Historic District, Washington County, Cairnbrook Historic District, Somerset County, and the Windber Historic District (Mine 40), Somerset County in terms of the integrity of the surviving housing stock.

The Cambria Steel Company of Johnstown constructed the community in 1916 and 1917 to supply high quality coking coal for its by-product coke ovens near Johnstown. The district contains the four extant extractive resources and archaeological remains of

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Slick Mine No. 91, Bethlehem Steel Company's most productive mine in Westmoreland County during the 1930s, and the associated mining town of Slickville.

The mining town of Slickville was named for Edwin E. Slick, vice-president of the Midvale Steel & Ordnance Company and the mine's first superintendant. Coal mining was established at Slickville by the Cambria Steel Company, from June and July, 1916, when company officials, geologists and engineers surveyed 1,200 acres of land purchased from five local farmers in Salem Township, Westmoreland County after 1900. The Cambria Steel Company dates back to 1842 but it was not until 1855 that the first rolling mill was completed in Johnstown and put into operation. The original name of the company was the Cambria Iron Works. This Johnstown-based company and the Freedom Iron Works at Lewiston were among the first iron companies in Pennsylvania to use the Bessemer method to make steel. The Cambria Iron Company produced steel rolls in 1867 from ingots made by the Pennsylvania Steel Company. The Rolling Mill Mine, located at Westmont, near Johnstown had satisfied the steel company's coal needs throughout the second half of the 19th century. This mine, opened in 1855, extracted coal from the "C" prime or Upper Kittanning seam. The Rolling Mill Mine worked over the largest underground area of any single mine in the country (as of 1920), covering approximately 19 square miles. The distance of the furthest working face was five miles from the portal. The record year production for this mine was 1905, when 804,188 net tons of coal were produced. After 1910, decline in coal production at the mine and rising demand for coal prompted steel company executives to find an alternative source of coal.

The Cambria Steel Company opened Slick Mine No. 1 in 1916 to extract coal from the 84 inch Pittsburgh seam to provide a reliable supply of high quality coking coal for its new by-product coke ovens near Johnstown. Additional drift entries were constructed within

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the district between 1917 and 1925. These mines were typical mining operations of this period. Coal was extracted by using a system of mining called the room-and-pillar method. An entry was driven to the coal seam and from this tunnel a series of tunnels were driven at right angles creating a number of "rooms" or "chambers." Mining activity occurs within these rooms which measure about eight yards wide. The company did not use electric or pneumatic undercutting machinery to remove coal from the seam; instead, immigrant miners used picks and shovels to accomplish this task. Coal was hauled by horses or mules from the rooms in wood carts or pulled by four six ton gathering locomotives to the main haulage ways. The West Penn Power Company provided electricity to the mine and the village until the construction of the power house in 1918. Three thirteen-ton and two six-ton locomotives, manufactured by the Jeffrey Company of Chicago, operated on the main hauling ways transporting coal to the surface and the tipple. The wood tipple, capable of weighing, sorting and crushing 3,000 gross tons of coal per day in 1918, was constructed of pre-cut lumber imported from Apollo. The tipple, located on the southeastern side of Saltsburg Street and bounded by State Route 819 and the former railroad bed of the Pennsylvania railroad, was built before the railroad to the mine had been completed. The company also constructed a machine shop, foreman and lamp house, cap and powder buildings and fan houses. Coal cars were discharged on rotary dumps, and kickbacks were used to return the emptied cars. Coal was dumped into crushers in the wood tipple, where it was crushed to sizes of between 3/4 inch and 3 inches. All slack coal, less than 3/4 inch in diameter, was bypassed directly to the loading-out chutes for immediate loading on the railroad cars. Low volatile coal was mined at the Rolling Mill Mine although it was of poor coking quality unless it was mixed with other types of coal. Coke was never produced at Slickville. Instead, run-of-the-mine slack and lump coal was

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transported east on the Turtle Creek Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad from Slickville to Johnstown via Export, Delmont, Saltsburg and Blairsville. Coal was never washed at Slickville before shipment but was washed and mixed with low volatile coal from the Rolling Mill Mine at the Rosedale by-product coke plant near Johnstown and placed into the plant's several hundred by-product coke ovens. The Rosedale plant was designed in 1916 with production commencing in 1917. Coal was burned in these coke ovens for nearly twenty four hours and converted into metallurgical coke. This coke plant located in a deep hollow near Hinckston Run north of the main Cambria steel mill, was constructed to produce coke for the mill's blast furnace and to recycle the gaseous by-products of the coking process. The Rosedale by-product plant produced ammonia, motor and pure benzol, toluol, xylol and solvent naphtha from the gases produced by the coking process. These European-designed coke ovens, dating from the 1880s, had replaced the inefficient beehive ovens in the production of coke during the 1920s. By-product coke ovens were constructed at the steel plant, and coal was transported by rail or river from the mine. The Rosedale plant, no longer extant, was visible on State Route 219 proceeding toward Ebensburg.

The drift entry mines, constructed at Slickville, operated as "captive" coal mines. This type of mine was owned and operated by large railroads, coke and steel companies and utilities from the 1880s. These companies, as principal consumers of large quantities of coal and coke, acquired their own coal mines and coke plants, so that they would not be dependent on fluctuation in the commercial coal market. An increasing percentage of coal mined in Pennsylvania and the nation from the 1880s came from these mines. They produced about 18% of the nation's coal from 1913 to 1918 and 25.6% of the nation's coal from 1920 to 1939. Steel companies of Pennsylvania produced 31.9% of

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the state's coal in 1924 while, nation-wide steel companies operated 232 mines, which produced 51.6% of the total captive-coal production in the United States in 1924.

Slickville was one of the many mines and communities constructed in western Pennsylvania, by steel companies, between 1916 and 1925 to supply their increasing demand for coke. Some of the more prominent "captive" mines and communities constructed during this period were Nemacolin, Greene County (Buckeye Coal Company of Ohio, a subsidiary of Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company), Mather, Greene County (Pickland, Mathers & Company of Cleveland), Indianola, Allegheny County (Inland Collieries Company, a subsidiary of the Inland Steel Company) and Vestaburg, Washington County (Vesta Coal Company, a subsidiary of Jones & Laughlin Steel Company).

The Slickville Historic District is a significant mining site because it includes significant surviving extractive facilities associated with the once dominant coal and coke industry of Pennsylvania. Four of the more than ten mining resources constructed for the extraction and processing of bituminous coal are extant at Slickville. The district as a whole meets National Register requirements under Criterion A in the area of industry and under Criterion D for archaeological remains. Many bituminous coal extractive facilities throughout Westmoreland County and western Pennsylvania were demolished after World War II and the decline of the industry in the Commonwealth. The number of sites containing extractive resources has been greatly reduced. The four surviving extractive resources in Slickville represent a fairly intact industrial extractive facility compared to those in Westmoreland County. Only a few abandoned mines in the county have more surviving mining resources. The Adams mine near Irwin has six resources, the Magee mine at Yukon has eight and the Criterion mine at Delmont has five and a few other

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mines have more surviving resources. The extant Slickville resources were constructed in the northeast part of the district and on the east side of State Route 819, bounded by Greensburg Avenue, Depot Street and Saltsburg Street. The company office-pay house, machine shop, power house and lamp house have excellent integrity because they retained their original size, design and layout.

The Slickville Historic District is significant under Criterion D for their archaeological remains and the information they may yield to historians and social scientists about past technology and machinery used in the industry, about the layout and scale of the facility, and about the daily lives of coal miners who worked at these facilities. The site of the razed buildings and structures of Slick Mine No. 91 including the tipple, mule barn, store house, sand and oil houses, fan houses have been razed since 1943 and the closing of the mine. Some foundations of these resources are found outside of the district. The tipple and slate dump are located south of Saltsburg Street and bounded in the west by Greensburg Avenue. Some former mining buildings including the mule barn are located within the district. The mule barn was located on the western corner of Second Street, bounded by Greensburg Avenue.

The Cambria Steel Company hired Thomas Tressler, an Apollo area contractor to cut ten million board feet of lumber in 1916, to be used in the construction of workers' houses and mining resources for the first of its four drift entry Slick mines. The mine resources were constructed before the Turtle Creek Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad arrived in Slickville. Its completion produced a coal boom in Salem Township and in neighboring Loyahanna Township. Slickville, formed in 1916 and 1917, was one of the largest mining communities and coal producers in Salem Township, but it was only one of the many new coal mining communities and mines that developed in the area during the 1920s.

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Coal companies were attracted to this region because of high quality gas coal and coking coal and the excellent railroad transportation network. Highland, Sloan and Tree Mills were examples of contemporary coal communities and mines that developed in Salem Township. Elrico, Patton, Moween, Robinson, Salemville and Wakena, were similar large coal operations and mining communities in neighboring Loyalhanna Township.

A boom-town atmosphere prevailed in Slickville from its founding in 1917 until the onset of the Great Depression in the fall of 1929. The mines employed 185 workers and produced 110,000 tons of coal in 1920. By 1923, coal production rose substantially as about 500 surface and underground workers toiled at the four Slick mines. The population of the village numbered over 1,200 persons. The Slickville property was obtained by the Midvale Steel & Ordnance Company, a Philadelphia-based company in 1919, and in 1923 the Bethlehem Steel Company acquired both these steel companies and the Slickville properties. The Bethlehem Steel Company was incorporated in 1904 with a capitalization of \$30 million. The company's original facilities included a steel plant in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, iron mines in Cuba and shipyards in San Francisco. The company expanded its holdings by purchasing the Pennsylvania Steel Company plant at Steelton and the Lackawanna steel plant of the Lackawanna Iron & Steel Company, near Buffalo, and the company's Ellsworth Coal Mining Division in western Pennsylvania before 1920. The Ellsworth Mining Division included the mines and the model company towns of Ellworth and Cokeburg, Washington County.

The Bethlehem Steel Company began an ambitious program of additions and improvements between 1923 and 1939 amounting to \$332 million. The four Slick mines were merged and renamed Slick Mine No. 91. The daily capacity of the wood tipple was enlarged with the addition of new sorting tables. The Slick mines were classified as

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non-gaseous mines by the mine inspectors of Pennsylvania. The company installed several new nine foot Sircocco disc fans and six foot diameter Jeffrey centrifugal fans to ensure ventilation in the mines. The circulation of fresh air throughout the extensive underground workings reduced the chance of the accumulation of poisonous or explosive gases. Nearly fifty thousand miners died in American mining accidents from 1870 to 1914. There were no major mining accidents at Slickville, although individual miners were killed in a variety of mining accidents.

The Slickville facility was one of fifteen "captive" mines operated in Cambria, Indiana, Washington and Westmoreland counties in western Pennsylvania by the Bethlehem Mines Corporation, a subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel Company. In later years, the Bethlehem Mines did business as "Industrial Collieries." Bethlehem was one of the major steel companies operating "captive" mines in western Pennsylvania, along with Inland Steel, Republic Steel, Jones & Laughlin Steel Company and H.C. Frick Coke Company, a subsidiary of the U.S. Steel Corporation. Slick Mine No. 91 produced about 545,151 tons of coal while employing 286 miners in 1930. Production had declined to 136,683 tons by 1940. Coal production at Slickville ended on October 2, 1943, when the seam was exhausted. Bethlehem sold off all its resources to Irwin Gas Coal Company for \$80,001. This Greensburg-based coal company sold off all the resources to individuals, including miners who had rented these houses for twenty years.

The Slickville mining community is significant under Criterion A in the areas of community planning and development and under Criterion C in the category of architecture. The mining community was an important component of the coal and coke industry, although not part of the actual extractive facility. Slickville is an excellent example of a well-planned "model" mining community constructed by a steel company in the first quarter

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of the 20th century. Some enlightened operators of large independent coal companies and "captive" mines began the construction of a number of "model" coal mining towns after the 1890s. Beside Slickville, other "model" towns laid out and built by steel companies were Bobtown, Mather, Nemacolin and Vestaburg. Slickville was built during the height of the reformist industrial housing era. Proponents of this movement demanded that operators of mines and coke plants improve the horrific conditions found in many of the coal towns. Many towns contained small, dilapidated, unpainted frame houses without weatherproofing, and lacking decent sanitary conditions and water supplies. They were drab and dirty places with dirt roads, a medley of odors, and without any type of recreation facilities. Some enlightened operators were influenced by new ideas on town planning. They came to believe well-treated workers would create a contented, efficient and productive work force. President J.H. Weaver of the Ebensburg Coal Company, a spokesman for this new corporate style of paternalism noted "if we want respectable intelligent men and women to work for us, we must see that they have decent, healthy and comfortable houses." Owners of many new steel-owned "captive" mines that opened during the period tried to inspire company loyalty in their employees by undertaking a series of paternalistic programs to improve working conditions and life in the town. They constructed large and clean workers' houses, charged fair and competitive prices at the company store and provided a variety of recreational activities for their workers. Most sponsored baseball teams and constructed playgrounds for children, while others constructed swimming pools and recreational halls for their workers and their families. This strategy was a conscious attempt by them to attract and maintain a stable labor force while discouraging the appeals of labor organizers.

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The construction of the Slickville Historic District was an example of this corporate paternalism. The steel owners of Slickville employed all these strategies with measured success until the turbulent 1930s. The management of the three steel companies constructed a livable and comfortable environment for workers by providing for their educational, religious, residential, social and commercial needs. It was not laid out in a linear or grid pattern. When Slickville was laid out by company engineers, they rejected the traditional grid or linear town design with its rows and rows of uniform housing and instead used a curvilinear plan. The town center of Slickville was located north of First and Second avenues, constructed as sweeping curved streets. The curvilinear plan was employed in the construction of a variety of "model" towns throughout the United States, for example in Pennsylvania at Vandergrift (1895) and Kistler (1918).

The company constructed six types of workers' houses and managers' houses, and all types are still evident throughout the district. About 90 company-owned houses formed the bulk of the buildings in Slickville. All workers' houses were equipped with electricity and heated by coal provided by the steel company to the tenants. Many houses had interior bathrooms, and some houses were equipped with a portable toilet on the rear porch. Standard monthly rents were quite reasonable and varied depending upon the size of the house. Rental costs for houses in 1923 were as follows: semidetached houses, \$7.50 per month per side; single-dwelling four-room houses, \$8.00; single dwelling five-room houses, \$7.00; single dwelling 6-room houses, \$9.50; single dwelling five-room bungalow, \$6.00; officials' houses, \$15.00; superintendent's house and store manager's house, each \$25.00. This rate included a flat fee of \$1.50 per month for light and \$2.00 for coal. All the workers' houses had backyard gardens that the miners' wives planted with vegetables to supplement the family's meager income. The company encouraged

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these gardens and each year plowed and fertilized them with manure from the company's large mule barn, formerly located on the corner lot of Second Avenue, west of State Route 819.

Slickville miners were unorganized workers until the social and economic upheaval of the 1930s, caused by the collapse of the stock market on Wall Street in 1929. The steel operator at Slickville had successfully foiled any attempts at unionization throughout the 1920s, including a futile attempt by Slickville miners during the 1922 national coal strike. The coal industry nearly collapsed during the Great Depression as bituminous coal production fell from 535 million tons in 1929 to 310 million tons in 1932. Aggressive attempts to organize non-union miners by the United Mine Workers of America in a local at Slickville occurred after the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act and Section 7a in 1933. This act provided for codes of fair competition, collective bargaining, and other measures designed to promote recovery from the economic depression then in existence. Union drives by the UMWA at Slickville were aggressively met by Bethlehem Steel. The company employed Coal and Iron Police to coerce miners back to work. Some militant miners and their families were evicted from their houses, but they fought back and violence escalated until Bethlehem finally capitulated and accepted unionization at Slickville about 1936.

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Geographic Data

UTM References Continued

E	Zone 17	Easting	625072	Northing	4479312
F	Zone 17	Easting	624888	Northing	4479408
G	Zone 17	Easting	624960	Northing	4476480
H	Zone 17	Easting	624912	Northing	4476912
I	Zone 17	Easting	624948	Northing	4480072
J	Zone 17	Easting	625024	Northing	4480120
K	Zone 17	Easting	625192	Northing	4479768
L	Zone 17	Easting	625260	Northing	4479744

Slickville Historic District : Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the southwestern corner of 102 Second Avenue, at the intersection of Second Avenue and Greensburg Avenue, proceed northwest approximately 1,500 feet following the rear property lines on Second Avenue to the rear property line of 243 Second Avenue. From the northwestern rear corner of this property, bounded by Second Avenue and Delmont Street, cross Delmont Street and travel west for 500 feet on the northside of the street until reaching the southwest corner of 36 Second Street. From this point travel north for 100 feet along the side of the building, then proceed east for 200 feet travelling behind the rear property lines of 408, 406, 404 and 402 Depot Street. At the rear of the property of 405 Maple Court travel north following the rear property lines of

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407 and 411 Maple Court. At the northwest corner of 411 Maple Court cross the empty lot to Cottage Street and proceed 1000 feet north on the east side of Cottage Street to the northwest corner of 50 Cottage Street, a vacant lot on this dead-end street. From this point proceed 120 feet east along the northern boundary of this property to the rear property line of 305 Greensburg Avenue.

At this point proceed north for 440 feet to the northwest corner of 317 Greensburg Avenue. From this corner travel east for approximately 400 feet crossing Greensburg Avenue to a point on the northeast rear corner of 316 Greensburg Avenue.

At this point follow the rear property lines of the houses on Greensburg Avenue for 1600 feet south to a point fronting on Saltsburg Street. From this point proceed 150 feet west on the northern side of Saltsburg Street to the east side of the former company store property located at the juncture of Greensburg Avenue and Depot Street. From this point on the eastern side of the former company office property cross Greensburg Avenue and travel south on the western side of Greensburg Avenue for 1600 feet to the original point at 102 Second Avenue.

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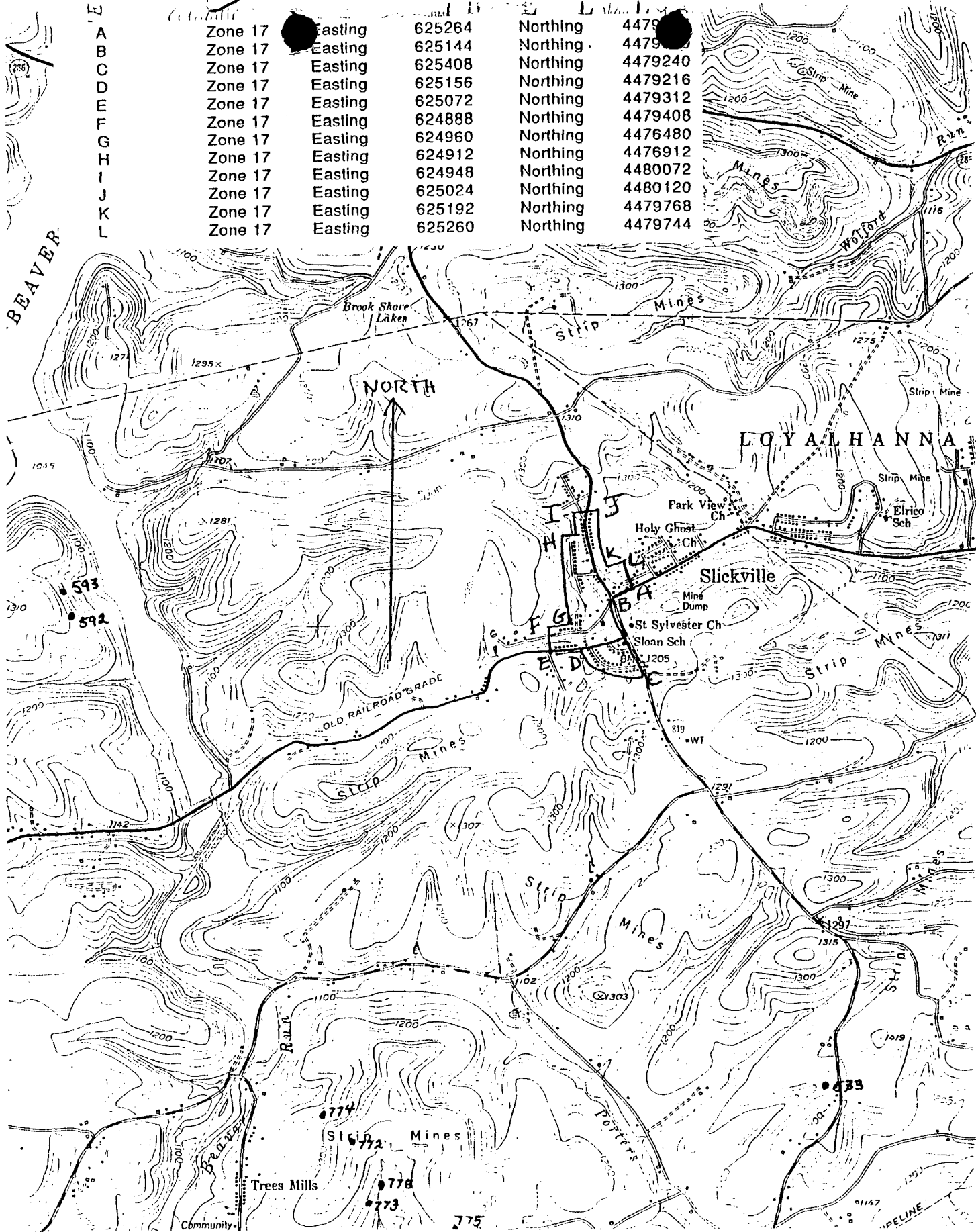
Slickville Historic District : Boundary Justification

The boundary contains 62 of 1,200 acres of land originally purchased by the Cambria Steel Company from five farmers in Salem Township beginning in 1900. This rural and undeveloped land was transformed into an extractive captive mine and company-owned coal town by this Johnstown-based steel company, the Midvale Steel & Ordnance Company and by the Bethlehem Steel Company between 1916 and 1943. The extant mining resources of this "captive" mine, the company-owned workers' and managers' housing and an assortment of social and commercial buildings constructed during the period of significance are located in the historic district. The four extractive resources associated with coal mining and coal processing at Slick Mine No. 91, between 1916 and 1943, are concentrated at the juncture of Saltsburg Street, Depot Street and Greensburg Avenue. The historic district's boundaries are almost identical to the area sold to the Irwin Gas Coal Company by the Bethlehem Steel Company for \$80,001 in 1943.

The boundary of the historic district excludes resources located north and south of the district along State Route 819 and west of the district on Delmont Street and Depot Street because they were constructed after the period of significance or are contemporary farms and not actively involved in the development of the district's coal economy. East of the proposed historic district on Saltsburg Street is a part of the unincorporated village of Slickville. This area was excluded because it developed independent of the historic district as a privately-owned community. Its development, since 1917, was ancillary to the Slickville Historic District. Also the area has poor integrity. Many buildings, constructed during the period of significance, have been razed while other surviving buildings lack integrity.

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L

Zone 17	Easting	625264	Northing	4479744
Zone 17	Easting	625144	Northing	4479744
Zone 17	Easting	625408	Northing	4479240
Zone 17	Easting	625156	Northing	4479216
Zone 17	Easting	625072	Northing	4479312
Zone 17	Easting	624888	Northing	4479408
Zone 17	Easting	624960	Northing	4476480
Zone 17	Easting	624912	Northing	4476912
Zone 17	Easting	624948	Northing	4480072
Zone 17	Easting	625024	Northing	4480120
Zone 17	Easting	625192	Northing	4479768
Zone 17	Easting	625260	Northing	4479744



Slickville Historic District
 Zone 17 Slickville Quadrangle map
 Salem Township, Westmoreland County
 UTM Reading on Continuations Sheet